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ABSTRACT

This report describes a training program designed to assist 15 Southeastern states in preparing quality early intervention personnel to serve young children with disabilities and their families. The goals of the project are described, including: (1) increasing states' progress in implementing the personnel preparation component of Part H of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act by facilitating linkages between institutions of higher education and state agencies; (2) increasing higher education faculty members' knowledge and skills related to providing effective and innovative Part H inservice training; (3) assisting faculty in embedding state-of-the-art information related to Part H content and training into the inservice training they provide to practitioners; (4) evaluating the impact of the training model on states and on faculty; and (5) disseminating training information and resources through a network of higher education faculty, state agency representatives, and other organizations. Critical components of the project's model are described, which include stakeholder support and vision, leadership commitment, individual and state needs assessment, infusion of information and activities to meet individual and state needs, action planning, and follow-up support during implementation. Products, presentations, and publications from the project are listed. (Contains 34 references.) (Author/CR)

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ED 404 823

Southeastern Institute for Faculty Training (SIFT):
A Training Model for Systems Change

FINAL REPORT

Early Education Programs for Children with Disabilities
Office of Special Education Programs
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- Winton, P. (1996). A model for supporting higher education faculty in their early intervention personnel preparation roles. Infants and Young Children, 8(3), 56-67.
- Winton, P., Catlett, C., & Houck, A. (1995). A systems approach to early intervention personnel preparation: A model for moving towards collaboration and effective training practices. In A. Widerstrom & D. Bricker (Eds.), Preparing personnel to work with infants and young children and their families: A team approach. Baltimore, MD: Paul Brookes.

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ABSTRACT

Southeastern Institute for Faculty Training (SIFT)

A Training Model for Systems Change

Pamela J. Winton, Principal Investigator **Camille Catlett,** Coordinator

Preparing quality early intervention (EI) personnel to serve young children with disabilities and their families is critical to the successful implementation of the Infant-Toddler Program of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (Part H of IDEA). Put simply, the job is not getting done. An analysis of states' progress towards implementing Part H suggests that personnel development is one of the areas in which the least amount of progress has been made. Not only are there shortages across multiple disciplines, existing early intervention personnel need retraining as roles and responsibilities are redefined and changed.

The Southeastern Institute for Faculty Training (SIFT) was designed to assist 15 Southeastern jurisdictions (AL, AR, DC, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, PR, SC, TN, VA, VI, WV) in addressing the problems described above. The goals of the project were: 1) to increase states' progress in implementing the personnel preparation component of Part H by facilitating linkages between institutions of higher education and state agencies; 2) to increase higher education faculty members' knowledge and skills related to providing effective and innovative Part H inservice training; 3) to assist faculty in embedding state-of-the-art information related to Part H content and training into the inservice training they provide to practitioners; 4) to evaluate the impact of the training model on states and on faculty participating in the Institute; and 5) to disseminate training information and resources through a network of higher education faculty, state agency representatives and other organizations committed to assisting each other in inservice training efforts. A systems-change approach was taken in an attempt to make a long lasting and meaningful impact on state-level early intervention personnel development efforts through the faculty training provided by SIFT.

The SIFT project implemented the model with one cohort of five states per year. The critical components of the model included: 1) stakeholder support and vision; 2) leadership commitment; 3) individual and state needs assessment; 4) infusion of information and activities to meet individual and state needs; 5) action planning; and 6) follow-up support during implementation. Evaluation and monitoring were features of each component. Through project activities, 276 stakeholders participated in planning and evaluation activities, and 192 faculty members (higher education faculty, family, agency representatives, service providers) received training directly. Significant findings included increased collaboration among institutions and individuals, increases in faculty knowledge, skill, and willingness to conduct inservice training, and application of new knowledge and skill to practice. Variables that were identified as facilitating the accomplishment of individual participant goals included the support of colleagues and follow-up support from the SIFT project. Identified barriers to accomplishing individual goals included lack of time/competing priorities and bureaucratic "red tape."

Leaders in 15 states indicated that the SIFT project served as a catalyst for positive changes that will endure. These include: new collaborative relationships among individuals; new infrastructures in some states, such as regional training teams, that were not in place before; new resources for faculty; and new ways of thinking about training with increased emphasis on systematic approaches to personnel preparation.

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GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The five broad goals and accompanying objectives of the Southeastern Institute for Faculty Training (SIFT) were:

Goal I. To increase states' progress in implementing the personnel preparation component of Part H by facilitating linkages among state agencies, families, universities, community colleges, and other institutions with training dollars, responsibilities and authority for early intervention personnel preparation

Objective 1: To conduct ongoing regional planning related to the goals, objectives, strategies, and actions of the SIFT

Objective 2: To conduct strategic planning and information sharing to facilitate the link between states' training needs, resources, and plans and the activities of the SIFT

Goal II. To increase higher education faculty members' knowledge and skills related to providing effective and innovative Part H inservice training

Objective 1: To identify faculty to participate in a sequence of training activities

Objective 2: To identify faculty needs related to providing inservice training in Part H content

Objective 3: To develop, implement, and evaluate an integrated sequence of training activities for faculty, culminating in a plan for embedding this new information into an inservice training plan

Objective 4: To develop new or adapt existing training materials to meet the needs identified through state and faculty needs assessments

Goal III. To assist faculty in embedding state-of-the-art information related to Part H content and training into the inservice training they provide to practitioners

Objective 1: To provide technical assistance and ongoing support and information to faculty related to Part H training

Goal IV. To evaluate the impact of the training model on states, on faculty participating in the Institute, and on the direct service providers they in turn provide with training

Objective 1: To document that the Institute activities and procedures are implemented

Objective 2: To document that the activities of the Institute were positively perceived by participants

Objective 3: To document that the Institute created change

Goal V. To disseminate training information and resources through a network of higher education faculty, state agency representatives and other organizations committed to assisting each other in inservice training efforts

Objective 1: To share information and materials with the field through publications and presentations

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROJECT

Preparing quality early intervention (EI) personnel to serve young children with disabilities and their families is critical to the successful implementation of the Infant-Toddler Program of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (Part H of IDEA).[1] Put simply, the job is not getting done. An analysis of states' progress towards implementing Part H suggests that personnel development is one of the areas in which the least amount of progress has been made.[2] Not only are there shortages across multiple disciplines,[3] existing early intervention personnel need retraining as roles and responsibilities are redefined and changed.[4]

Higher education faculty are an existing resource for states to use in addressing the Part H manpower shortages and training needs.[5,6] Unfortunately, survey research conducted on a nation-wide basis[7] and on a state-wide basis[8] indicates that, on the average, higher education faculty in the key early intervention disciplines cannot be assumed to have expertise in infancy, family and interdisciplinary issues. This suggests that, although a valuable resource, their ability to serve in both inservice and preservice Part H training roles may be limited.

Many university programs have indicated a need for faculty rebuilding, renewal, and support.[7] However, numerous barriers have been identified that make this an elusive and difficult goal to achieve. One barrier is that universities traditionally have not shown an administrative commitment to faculty retooling,[9] especially in any kind of systematic fashion as is necessary to address the rapid changes in practices associated with Part H. This seems to be the case even though School of Education Deans recognize that there are a lack of qualified faculty to teach the Part H content and an absence of sites or opportunities for faculty to receive training in these areas.[10]

In summary, the early intervention personnel problems faced by states are: (a) large numbers of early intervention direct service providers need training in early intervention content areas; (b) trainers with knowledge of the content, design, delivery and evaluation of quality inservice are needed to provide this training to direct service providers; (c) higher education faculty are a potential resource for providing this inservice training, but they themselves need training; (d) higher education institutions are not likely to provide opportunities for faculty to upgrade their teaching skills in early intervention content areas.

The Southeastern Institute for Faculty Training (SIFT) was one of four regional faculty training institutes funded from 1992 to 1995 by the Early Education Program for Children with Disabilities (EEPCD), Department of Education. It was designed to assist 15 Southeastern jurisdictions* in addressing the problems described above. The mission of the project was to prepare university faculty to serve as leaders in providing inservice training for early intervention. A related mission was that the preservice training provided by these faculty would be improved as a result of their participation in the model. A systems-change approach was taken in an attempt to make a long lasting and meaningful impact on state-level early intervention personnel development efforts through the faculty training provided by SIFT. Based on existing research,[11,12] a "Checklist of Quality Indicators related to Early Intervention Inservice Training" was developed early in the project as a summary of the principles and practices related to quality and collaboration in personnel preparation that SIFT was intending to

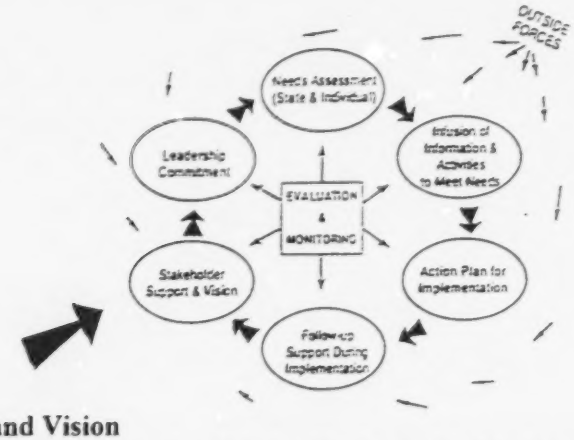
* Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, U.S. Virgin Islands, and West Virginia

promote[13] (see Appendix A). The SIFT project implemented the model with one cohort of five states per year.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING MODEL, ACTIVITIES, AND PARTICIPANTS

The SIFT change model consisted of seven component parts, as illustrated in Figure 1. The rationale and research base supporting each component follows.

Figure 1. **Critical Components of the SIFT Change Model**


OUTSIDE FORCES
Needs Assessment (State & Individual)
Infusion of Information & Activities to Meet Needs
Leadership Commitment
EVALUATION & MONITORING
Stakeholder Support & Vision
Action Plan for Implementation
Follow-up Support During Implementation

Stakeholder Support and Vision

One of the challenges in implementing a regional model of faculty training is being responsive to the unique and diverse needs and priorities of states. A faculty training model that does not build on and enhance existing early intervention personnel development efforts and is not supported by key personnel who hold power, money and authority at administrative levels is unlikely to be effective.[14-17] Without administrative support, faculty receiving training in innovative content and instructional strategies may find themselves unable to implement these ideas in their natural teaching contexts.

Identifying and involving key state-level early intervention leaders in the SIFT project was the first step in the process. The approach to identifying leaders was to ask the Part H Coordinator and the director of the University Affiliated Program (UAP) in each state for their support of the SIFT Project . This dyad was asked to identify a group of key people across agencies, disciplines, and institutions within the state with expertise, power and resources related to early intervention personnel preparation and invite them to a 1-2 day meeting in their state. They were asked that the leaders group include family representation and be culturally diverse. In some states, a group of this description already existed in the form of an Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) personnel preparation sub-committee. In those states, the dyad used the SIFT opportunity to invite "new blood" to join the group or to engage key persons who had lost interest in participation. In other states, there was not an existing group of leaders; the SIFT project presented these states with an opportunity to convene such a group.

The leaders meeting was designed to accomplish several objectives. First, it was an opportunity to identify all of the existing personnel preparation initiatives that were taking place within a given state. In many states the number of initiatives was impressive; however, the lack of coordination and collaboration among the various efforts was frequently problematic. In several states, higher education training initiatives in early intervention were not coordinated with Part H. The second purpose of the meeting was to enable the leaders to share perspectives and develop a vision and

specific plans for future personnel preparation activities in the state. These plans varied considerably from state to state. They included activities such as expanding or replicating successful personnel preparation models that had been developed through existing projects, disseminating information across agencies about existing training, and activating and engaging new energy into personnel preparation planning efforts at the state level. The third purpose of the meeting was to identify a key group of faculty from institutions of higher education and determine how they could help the state accomplish their plans for personnel preparation after receiving training and support from the SIFT project. The SIFT Project required that states select a faculty group which represented multiple disciplines, cultural diversity, and family members. Part H and UAP representatives were also required. The leaders within each state were given a chance to identify additional selection criteria that fit with their vision or plan for their state. Examples of criteria identified by states included geographical representation, willingness on faculty's part to devote a certain number of days to inservice training, and linkages with existing state training initiatives.

Leadership Commitment

A critical step in the SIFT model was conveying to the faculty why they were selected, what the expectations of them were from the state level, and what the state "vision" or plan was that they were being asked to assist in implementing. A strategy that proved effective in supporting faculty participation in the SIFT project was sending "boss/dean" letters on their behalf to administrators or supervisors of their choosing. These letters described the SIFT project and highlighted the unique leadership opportunity being available for the faculty member from their university. These "boss/dean" letters proved important in legitimizing faculty participation in state-wide training efforts and assisting faculty in obtaining travel support from their universities to attend a four day faculty training institute developed and implemented by the SIFT Project.

Needs Assessment

A key factor in designing effective training is ensuring that the training is responsive to the perceived needs of the trainees.[18-20] As soon as faculty were selected, they were asked to respond to a needs assessment measure related to content areas, instructional strategies and resources that they would like exposure to in order to enhance their ability to provide early intervention training to others. The results of this needs assessment, as well as the state priorities identified by the leaders from the five states, shaped the four day faculty training institute.

Infusion of Information and Activities to Meet Needs

An important consideration in assessing training needs is the extent to which it is possible to respond effectively to the needs that are identified. In his review of the literature on staff development and the process of change, Guskey[21] made that point that it is better not to collect needs assessment information if the needs cannot be addressed, simply because of the negative feelings that participants have when they feel that they took the time to share their needs and the information was ignored.

- Instructional Sessions. During the four day faculty training institute, 30-35 different instructional sessions (lasting from 1 -2 1/2 hours) were provided. They were organized around the early intervention content areas that faculty identified as being of primary interest through the needs assessment. These sessions were facilitated by expert consultants who were chosen for both their knowledge of the content area and their reputations as experienced trainers in those areas. Whenever possible, sessions were co-facilitated to model interdisciplinary and family-professional collaboration. Rather than the traditional content-focused instruction, the sessions were organized around how to train others about the particular content area. A variety of innovative instructional

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strategies, reflecting principles of adult learning[22-24] and with a particular focus on strategies that were prioritized on the needs assessment, were demonstrated. For instance, any one session might feature a variety of instructional strategies, such as video, role play and interactive activities. At the end of each session, opportunities were provided for participants to discuss strategies they saw modeled and how they might use them in inservice and preservice contexts.

- Interactive Library and Resource Guide. In response to needs assessment data indicating that access to training materials was a priority for faculty, an interactive library of innovative, family-centered, interdisciplinary early intervention training resources was created. These materials were transported to the four day training faculty training institute and were organized by content area in a large room reserved for this purpose. Chairs, tables, portable VCR's, and time were available so that faculty could explore these resources in depth. In addition, the materials were catalogued in an accompanying *Resource Guide*[25] that included a brief description and ordering information. What is notable about this collection of materials is that many are not commercially available and therefore, are not widely marketed or known to faculty. The majority were developed through grant funded projects and are available at reasonable purchase prices. Special collections that were included in the library included course syllabi, materials that have been translated into Spanish, and measures for evaluating training outcomes.

- Team-Building, Planning and Networking Time. Faculty indicated on the needs assessment that access to other faculty providing early intervention training was a resource that would help them in their training roles. Therefore, 8-10 hours of time during the four day institute was dedicated as team building and planning time. A large portion of this time was devoted to state meetings that focused on specifying plans for how the faculty could assist with the vision for early intervention personnel preparation identified by the leaders in their states. This provided a natural context for faculty to share ideas and expertise across disciplines, agencies and institutions within their state. Time was also set aside for "issues" sessions at which faculty from across all five states in a particular cohort could convene around a special topic of interest to them.

Encouraging Practical Application of Ideas through Action Planning

The importance of linking the information being conveyed in training to real life practices and experiences is another component that has been described as critical to the successful training experience.[15,17,26-29] A variety of strategies were used during the faculty training institute to promote and model this concept.

- Making instructional materials accessible. One strategy for making the materials accessible was to provide every participant with a handout set from each instructional session. The handouts were designed so that faculty could use them in their own training. For example, if a session facilitator used an overhead, a hard copy of the overhead was included in the handouts. Session facilitators also made extensive use of the instructional materials in the interactive library as a way of acquainting faculty with those resources.

- Identifying short term goals. Another strategy for encouraging practical application was to ask participants to identify specific goals that they wanted to accomplish during the four day faculty training institute. On the first of the four days, participants were asked to write their personal goals on "Post-it" notes and place them in a strategic location that enabled them to check on their progress during the four days. As part of their orientation to the four day schedule of activities, they were reminded that the time was theirs to spend in whatever ways would enable them to

accomplish their objectives. Scheduled independent time, planned variety in the instructional sessions, and opportunities to schedule sessions around topics of interest to them were all ways of conveying that participants were in charge of their own learning; the SIFT staff and invited facilitators had structured the event in a way that was flexible and responsive to adult learners.[23] This strategy helped the participants focus on the aspects of the training experience that had the most practical application for them.

- Identifying long-term goals. Another strategy was to request that participants develop a specific plan for how they would use what they had learned or experienced at the faculty training institute back in their states. This planning process took place at a state level and at an individual level. As described earlier, each state faculty team was asked to develop a specific state action plan that provided timelines, objectives and denoted responsibilities related to carrying out the "vision" or plan identified by the leader groups in their states. In addition to state plans, participants were asked to develop individualized "Back Home" Plans, which specified personal objectives related to preservice or inservice early intervention training that were inspired by their SIFT experience. Some examples of personal goals identified included: (a) revising assessment courses to include family-centered content, (b) inviting parents to present or co-instruct, and (c) inviting colleagues from other disciplines to plan and implement a workshop. Participants were also provided with the "Checklist of Quality Indicators Related to Early Intervention Inservice Training" (see Appendix A) which served as both a checklist to use when they were planning inservice training and as a reminder of what they might advocate for when they participated in policy or planning groups.

Providing Follow-up Support and Technical Assistance

Providing follow-up support and technical assistance is regarded in the literature as a critical component to ensuring application of learning.[29,30] SIFT provided ongoing support for a period of six months after the faculty training institute. This support consisted of several elements. First of all, SIFT requested that the states sponsor two meetings between state faculty and the leaders group during the six month period. One meeting was held within a month of the training so that state faculty teams could share their plans and what they had learned at SIFT with the leaders groups in their states. The second meeting was at the end of the six month follow-up period. Its purpose was to evaluate the success of the state plan, to identify barriers and facilitators related to accomplishing the plan, and to identify "next steps" in terms of early intervention personnel preparation in the state. The underlying goal of this meeting was to promote the "institutionalization " of the SIFT efforts into ongoing state efforts. So often when grant funded projects end, the innovations or efforts that were being promoted dissipate. A case in point is research on the fate of ten interdisciplinary early intervention preservice programs studied by Rooney.[31] At the end of the funding period, 9 out of 10 had reverted to traditional training programs; the interdisciplinary aspects had vanished without the grant support.

A third follow-up support strategy was the ongoing technical assistance through telephone contact and newsletter exchange provided to all participants. This support was available throughout the three year grant period. To date, over 700 individuals are on the SIFT mailing list; this large number reflects, in part, the interest of Deans, chairpersons, and other administrators who have requested information as a result of exposure to SIFT through boss/dean letters. SIFT has responded to over requests for technical assistance. The majority of these requests have focused on brainstorming with participants about activities, resources, and strategies related to training they are planning.

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Evaluation Strategy

Evaluating the effectiveness of personnel preparation model programs presents significant challenges. Evaluation must take place at several levels and look at proximal as well as distal outcomes. In addition, evaluation strategies must be able to take into account the individual and state priorities and individual differences in terms of identified outcomes. As illustrated in Figure 1, evaluation took place at every phase of implementation. Data are presented and findings discussed in the Evaluation Findings section of this document, which follows Methodological or Logistical Problems.

METHODOLOGICAL OR LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS

All modifications to the original project design could more accurately be described as program improvements than problems. The Technical Advisory Board (TAB) provided helpfu guidance related to project improvements (see Appendix B). The initial design for working with fifteen states simultaneously was modified to focus on three cohort of five states each. This enabled project staff to focus each sequence of planning and training on the needs of the participating states. It also enabled states to participate in the most timely manner, by selecting Cohort 1 (Year 1), Cohort 2 (Year 2), or Cohort 3 (Year 3). In addition Goal I (to increase states' progress in implementing the personnel preparation component of Part H by facilitating linkages between institutions of higher education and state agencies) was broadened to reflect an appreciation of the many stakeholders in personnel preparation (state agencies, families, universities, community colleges, and other institutions with training dollars, responsibilities and authority for early intervention personnel preparation). Progress reported in the Evaluation section of this document reflects that broadened scope.

One challenge for this project, and the three faculty training institute counterparts, was to coordinate efforts, share information, and plan future joint efforts. Naturally occurring events, such as NEC*TAS conferences, were utilized for meetings that were supported by, and when possible participated in, by our shared federal project officer. With technical assistance and fiscal support from NEC*TAS, SIFT took lead responsibility for the cross-institute data analysis and the orchestration of a coordinated summary of the four projects (see Products, page 15). A 12-month no-cost extension was sought and secured to complete the work on this very important product.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Outcomes from SIFT, documented through multi-method data collection strategies, indicate that the model was effective. Highlights from these data are provided as they relate to the five project goals.

Goal I. To increase states' progress in implementing the personnel preparation component of Part H by facilitating linkages among state agencies, families, universities, community colleges, and other institutions with training dollars, responsibilities and authority for early intervention personnel preparation

Identifying key stakeholders, or early intervention leaders with power, money, and authority for early intervention training, was an initial activity of the project. The approach to this task was to ask the Part H Coordinator and the Director of the University Affiliated Program (UAP) in each state for their support of the SIFT project. This dyad was asked to identify a group of key people to be invited

to a 1-2 day state meeting. Each state meeting was designed to accomplish the following objectives: (1) to identify all of the existing personnel preparation initiatives that were taking place; (2) to enable the leaders to share perspectives and develop a vision and specific plans for future personnel preparation activities in the state; and (3) to identify a group (n=12-15) of faculty from institutions of higher education that they felt could help the state accomplish their plans for personnel preparation after receiving four days of training (faculty training institute) and ongoing support from the SIFT project. This group of leaders (n=262 total across the 15 states with a range of from 7-52 in the stakeholder group within each state) met twice over an 18 month period. They met at the beginning of the project to accomplish the above objectives; and they met six months after the faculty training institute to evaluate the success of the SIFT project and to identify next steps for the state in terms of accomplishing personnel preparation goals.

Data collected from these leaders immediately prior to their involvement with the SIFT project indicated that many leaders were unaware of existing state personnel preparation efforts other than their own. They were not operating within an overall plan for early intervention personnel preparation. In fact, most were unaware that a Comprehensive System for Personnel Development (CSPD) existed in their state. This CSPD plan is necessary for states to receive Part H funds; therefore, all states had plans. As illustrated in Figure 2, comparisons of the pre-institute and six-month post-institute responses indicated that statistically significant changes occurred in this respect. Leaders were more likely to know that a CSPD plan existed.

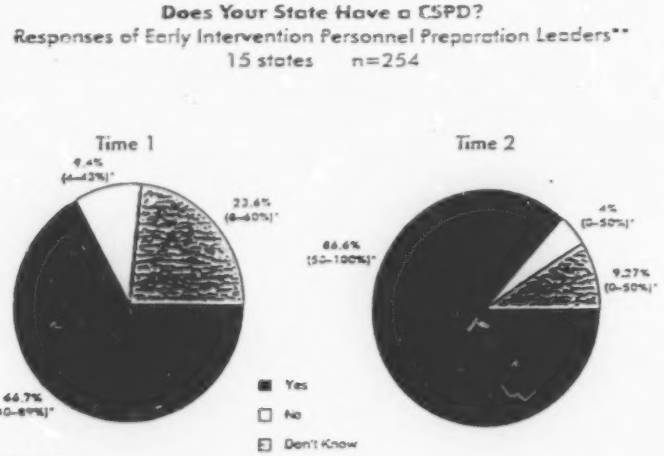

Figure 2 * Range by state
** Time 1 vs. Time 2 differences are statistically significant

In addition, comparison of pre/six-month post data indicated that the CSPD plans were more likely to be used and more likely to be coordinated across Part B and Part H of IDEA. Other statistically significant findings include the following:

- increased coordination and collaboration across agencies in inservice efforts
- representatives of institutions of higher education more involved in planning and
- implementing inservice training
- institutions of higher education doing a more adequate job at preservice training
- more linkages between preservice and inservice efforts
- greater family participation in training
- more training efforts linked with certification
- more interdisciplinary efforts at the preservice and inservice levels
- more family-centered inservice training

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A question of interest is to what extent can these changes be attributed to the SIFT project. At the six month post-institute follow-up point, 92% of the leaders surveyed felt that the SIFT project had made a significant contribution to their state's early intervention personnel preparation efforts, and 99% felt that SIFT had contributed to their knowledge of personnel preparation activities within their state. These quantitative findings are supported by qualitative evidence of lasting changes related to quality and collaboration in state personnel preparation efforts. At the six month follow-up meetings held in each state, the key leaders rated the extent to which they felt the efforts started through SIFT would continue at a mean of 4.25 on a 1-5 scale (with 5 being "extremely likely" that efforts will continue).

Goal II. To increase higher education faculty members' knowledge and skills related to providing effective and innovative Part H inservice training

In each state, leaders were asked to identify a group of faculty to participate in a four day training institute provided through the SIFT project. The SIFT project required that states select a faculty group that represented multiple disciplines, cultural diversity, family members, Part H and the UAP. In addition, SIFT defined "faculty" in an inclusive fashion so that practica supervisors and adjunct instructors were included to ensure the presence of direct service providers on the state faculty teams. The 191 faculty who participated from the 15 states represented 16 different disciplines with a mean of 12.5 years of service delivery experience and 9.98 years of personnel preparation experience. Twenty-one percent were family members with children with disabilities, and there was 27% minority representation (see Table 1).

Table 1. Number and Characteristics of the Individuals Who Received Direct Training from the SIFT Project

Characteristic	Percent
Ethnicity	
European American	73.0
African American	16.9
Latino/Hispanic	8.5
Native American	1.1
Asian	.5
Parent of a Child with a Disability	20.8
Primary Work Setting	
University	42.6
State Agency	22.3
University Affiliated Program (UAP)	8.0
Community Agency	9.0
Community College	2.1
Other	16.0
Discipline	
Early Childhood Special Education	15.9
Special Education	12.6
Psychology	9.7
Speech-Language Pathology	7.7
Child Development	6.8
Education	6.8
Nursing	6.3
Medicine	4.8
Social Work	4.8
Physical Therapy	4.3
Early Education	2.4
Nutrition	1.9
Occupational Therapy	1.0
Audiology	.5
Other	14.5

As soon as faculty were selected they were asked to respond to a needs assessment measure related to content areas, instructional strategies and resources to which they would like exposure in order to enhance their ability to provide early intervention training to others. Their priorities for content were (top five in decreasing order of priority): cultural diversity/IDEA (tied); family-centered practices/IFSP (tied); and inclusion. Training strategies that they prioritized were: families as co-teachers; team training; and cross-discipline co-teaching. Resources that they said would best help them were: access to training resources (packaged curricula, videotapes, activities); show of interest from Part H; and access to other faculty doing early intervention training. The results of the needs assessment data, as well as the state priorities identified by the leaders in each cohort of five states, were used to design the four day training institutes held each year. The training institutes are described in detail in Winton[34] and Winton, Catlett, and Houck[32].

Data suggest that the faculty training institutes were successful in terms of short-term and long-term outcomes (6 month-follow-up). These data showed increases in faculty knowledge and skill in all 17 early intervention content areas and training strategies measured (significant differences between pre and six-month post). The faculty also showed a statistically significant increase in their commitment and willingness to participate in community-based, early intervention inservice training and technical assistance and, in fact, did increase the amount of inservice training they provided after participation in the SIFT training project. This commitment was made despite the fact that inservice training is not a primary part of a university faculty member's position. This indicates that faculty are willing, and when given support and training and encouragement by state agencies, able to serve as competent inservice training resources. University faculty may be an untapped human resource for state agencies that have the bulk of the inservice training responsibilities.

Goal III. To assist faculty in embedding state-of-the-art information related to Part H content and training into the inservice training they provide to practitioners

The true test of effectiveness of a project like SIFT is the extent to which new knowledge and skills are applied to real life settings. Pre/six-month post comparisons of reports of training practices utilized by faculty indicate that this did indeed occur. Training provided by SIFT faculty participants improved from pre to six-month post in terms of quality indicators identified in advance by the SIFT project. Specifically, participants were more likely to provide training that:

- was coordinated with their state's CSPD plan
- was endorsed by administrators
- was attended by administrators
- included experiential activities and modeling and demonstration opportunities
- used strategies for applying training ideas to the workplace
- used training strategies that were varied to meet different learning styles
- included action planning (trainees identified specific ideas/practices that they would try)

One of the critical components to the SIFT model was to request that participants develop a specific plan for how they would use what they learned through the SIFT project in their states and universities. This planning process took place at a state level, with the generation of a specific state action plan, and at the individual level, with the generation of individual action plans. Participants were interviewed by telephone at a six-month follow-up point about the barriers and facilitators that helped or hindered them in accomplishing individual goals that they identified as part of their SIFT participation. The results of a content analysis of these interviews are indicated in Table 2.

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Table 2.

Variables that Impacted Implementation of Individual Action Plans
(15 States)
n = 162 respondents who identified 1001 individual goals

- **Facilitators**
  - Support of Colleagues
  - Follow-up Support from SIFT
- **Barriers**
  - Not Enough Time/Competing Priorities
  - Bureaucratic "Red tape"

Six-month follow-up meetings were held in 14 of the 15 states with the leader and faculty teams who participated in the project. The barriers and facilitators identified in these meetings affecting the accomplishment of state goals were similar to those affecting individual goals. In 12 of the 14 states the personal relationships and mutual support that had been forged through the SIFT experience were cited as major facilitators to accomplishing goals. Comments like, "We are now mentors to one another" characterized the nature of the partnerships that had been formed. During the individual telephone interviews, participants identified many positive outcomes that resulted from their involvement with the SIFT project. At the end of the interview they were asked to identify the major impact. A content analysis of responses indicated that the relationships formed through SIFT was the most frequent response to this question. These relationships were with other faculty, family members, state agency representatives, SIFT staff and faculty, and SIFT participants from other states. The two other most frequently mentioned responses to the major impact question were related to their knowledge and use of innovative training strategies and their knowledge and incorporation of new early intervention training content.

In terms of barriers, the lack of time/competing individual responsibilities and priorities was identified as a major barrier in 10 of the 14 state meetings. In addition, the geographic distance between team members, bureaucratic red tape, lack of administrative support, and lack of communication between key leaders were also mentioned as barriers in 50% of the states. It should be noted that there was turnover in the Part H Coordinator position in 8 of the 15 states during the SIFT project. These transitions definitely were a disruptive force in states' efforts to pursue goals in an efficient and timely fashion. It should also be noted that SIFT was most successful in states in which there was clear, unequivocal, and consistent support for faculty training and involvement in inservice training from the Part H leadership.

Goal IV. To evaluate the impact of the training model on states, on faculty participating in the Institute, and on the direct service providers they in turn provide with training

All planned project activities and procedures were accomplished in a timely manner. Measures to evaluate the perceived effectiveness of and documented changes from the SIFT faculty training institutes were developed and data analyzed, as discussed above under Goals 2 and 3.

Goal V. To disseminate training information and resources through a network of higher education faculty, state agency representatives and other organizations committed to assisting each other in inservice training efforts

The SIFT project was very successful in sharing information and materials with diverse audiences committed to early intervention personnel development. All planned activities were accomplished at a level that greatly exceeded initial expectations, as described in the Project Impact section below.

PROJECT IMPACT

Project impact is described in this section in terms of products developed and available, presentations, publications, and other indicators of the project's effect on the field and families. A final section summarizes the implications of findings by describing lessons learned through the SIFT project and promising strategies for future efforts.

Products

Winton, P. (1993). What we have learned about Part H personnel preparation. Unpublished document. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center. *Pamphlet summarizes research related to effective practices in early intervention personnel preparation.* Cost: Free with self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE).

Catlett, C. (1995). How to create and use a petting zoo. Unpublished guidelines. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center. *Description of an innovative strategy for assisting preservice and inservice trainers in discovering new training resources.* Cost: Free with self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE).

Catlett, C., & Winton, P. (1996). Resource guide: Selected early childhood/early intervention training materials. (5th ed.) Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center. *This annotated bibliography includes over 300 resources that might assist in designing preservice or inservice instruction. Resources, including curricula, videotapes, programmed texts, and discussion guides, are grouped by content area (e.g., assessment, cultural diversity).* Cost: $10.00.

Winton, P. (1996). Inservice personnel preparation quality indicators; Preservice personnel preparation quality indicators. Unpublished checklists. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center. *Based on research related to effective practices (see Winton, 1993), these checklists are useful for reinforcing promising practices and promoting effective changes in early intervention personnel preparation.* Cost: Free with self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE).

Hebbeler, K. (Ed.) (in press). *Regional faculty institutes: Improving the quality of early intervention personnel by enhancing faculty expertise.* Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center. *This document summarizes the findings of the four federally-funded faculty development institutes.* Cost: Free while limited supplies are available.

Dissemination Activities

Presentations

Winton, P. (1993, June). Implications of current research for professional development. Panel and presentation at the 2nd Annual Conference of NAEYC's National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development, Minneapolis, MN.

Winton, P. (1993, August). Family-centered care: Moving from philosophy to practice. Keynote address at Midwestern Faculty Institute Summer Training Institute. St. Paul, MN.

Winton, P. (1993, October). Innovative approaches to preservice training. Presentation at North Carolina - Division for Early Childhood Annual Conference, Greensboro, NC.

Catlett, C., & Winton, P. (1993, December). What works best: Maximizing the benefits of inservice training. International Division for Early Childhood Conference, San Diego, CA.

Catlett, C., Campbell, P.H., Smith, M., & Hertzberg, D. (1993, December). Bridging the Tower-Trench Gap: Regional approaches to faculty training. Zero to Three/National Center for Clinical Infant Programs, Washington, DC.

Winton, P., McBride, S., Pinones, A., & Bohlin, J. (1993, December). Parent-professional collaboration in personnel preparation: Pathways to family-centered practices. Presentation at the National Center for Clinical Infant Programs 8th Biennial Training Institute, Washington, DC.

Catlett, C. (1994, April). Addressing personal, programmatic and community elements in local CSPD activities: Using self-assessment instruments. Invited presentation at California Early Intervention Technical Assistance Network (CEITAN) Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Spring Institute, Newport Beach, CA.

Catlett, C. (1994, April). Training plan development: Identifying material and human resources and effective training processes to address needs. Invited presentation at CEITAN Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Spring Institute San Mateo, CA.

Sloop, S., & Catlett, C. (1994, May). Family-centered practices: New approaches to old topics. Southeastern Institute for Faculty Training (SIFT) training, Flat Rock, NC.

Catlett, C. (1994, August). New ways to teach old content. Invited presentation at Personnel Development in Early Intervention: Wingspread III conference. Racine, WI.

Catlett, C. (1994, August). New ways to make a difference: Expanded faculty roles in early intervention. Invited presentation at Missouri Higher Education Consortium, Columbia, MO.

Catlett, C. (1994, August). Family centered practices: New approaches to old topics. Invited presentation at Partnerships for Progress IV, Columbia, MO.

Catlett, C. (1994, October). Building parent-professional teams in early intervention. Invited presentation at Mississippi Early Childhood Association conference. Tupelo, MS.

Catlett, C., & Edmondson, R. (1994, October). Bridging the tower-trench gap: Using faculty as a training resource. First Steps International Exceptional Children's Early Intervention Conference. St. Thomas, USVI.

Catlett, C. (1994, October). Fitting it all in: Strategies for embedding new content in existing training. First Steps International Exceptional Children's Early Intervention Conference. St. Thomas, USVI.

Winton, P., Sloop, S., Catlett, C., & Perrotta, G. (1994, October). Towers-Trenches-Bureaucrats: What can make this personnel preparation triangle work? International Division for Early Childhood Conference, St. Louis, MO.

Winton, P. (with D. Sexton, S. Kontos, S. Odom, B. Smith, & S. Barney) (1994, October) Integration research on preschoolers: Past practices, current status and future. Presentation at International Early Childhood Conference on Children with Special Needs (DEC). St. Louis, MO.

Catlett, C. (1994, November). What works best: Ideas from the Southeastern Institute for Faculty Training (SIFT). American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, New Orleans, LA.

Crais, E.R., & Catlett, C. (1994, November).You want me to teach what? Or, adding new course content. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, New Orleans, LA.

Catlett, C. (1995, April). Improving teamwork in early intervention. Short course (10 hours) presented at Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, IL.

Winton, P. (1995, April). Keynote address at state-wide "Trainer's Retreat", sponsored by the Ohio Department of Health, Columbus, OH.

Winton, P., McEvoy, M., & Catlett, C. (1995, May). Towers-trenches-bureaucrats-families: Creating collaboration around personnel preparation. 1995 CSPD Conference for Leadership and Change, Washington, DC.

Winton, P., McEvoy, M., Catlett, C. (1995, May). Embedding quality and collaboration into early intervention personnel preparation. Annual Comprehensive System for Personnel Development Meeting, Washington, DC.

Catlett, C., & Walter, S. (1995, June). Family-professional partnerships: Methods and materials that support the process. Invited presentation at 1995 Midwest Consortium for Faculty Development, Minneapolis, MN.

Catlett, C. (1995, June). Service coordination: Methods and materials that support the process. Invited presentation at 1995 Midwest Consortium for Faculty Development, Minneapolis, MN.

Winton, P. (1995, June). Keynote address at the Midwestern Faculty Training Institute, Minneapolis, MN.

Catlett, C. (1995, July). Resources, strategies and new approaches. Invited presentation, Georgia Higher Education Consortium for Early Intervention, Augusta, GA.

Winton, P.J., Catlett, C., Campbell, P., Bruder, M., Leifield, L, Smith, M., & Lewis, H. (1995, July) Four dimensions of early intervention personnel preparation: What can help administrators, academics, families and service providers to work effectively together. Partnerships for Progress, Arlington, VA.

Catlett, C., Walter, S., & Felton, L. (1995, August). New approaches to familiar topics: Methods and materials for training on key early intervention topics. Illinois Higher Education Consortium for Early Intervention, Chicago, IL.

Catlett, C., & Coleman, T. (1995, September). What works best: Maximizing the benefits of training on cultural diversity. North Carolina Association for the Education of Young Children/Division for Early Childhood Annual Study Conference, Greensboro, NC.

Catlett, C. (1995, October). New materials and methods for pursuing family-centeredness. 1995 Area Program Conference for Early Intervention Staff, New Bern, NC.

Catlett, C., & Crais, E.R. (1995, November). You want me to teach what? Or adding new course content. International Division for Early Childhood Conference, Orlando, FL.

Catlett, C., Winton, P.J., McEvoy, M., Flynn, L., Bruder, M.B., Campbell, P., Bryant, L., Weinberg, B., & Capone, A. (1995, November). Systems change in early intervention personnel preparation: Findings of the four faculty training institutes. International Division for Early Childhood Conference, Orlando, FL.

Winton, P.J., Catlett, C., Solomon, J.W., Michael, D., Sanders, P., & Irick, K. (1995, November). Embedding quality and collaboration into personnel preparation: Lessons learned that you can use. International Division for Early Childhood Conference, Orlando, FL.

Winton, P., McWilliam, P., Darkes, L., & Vance, S. (1996, February). Techniques to assess program practices. Series of presentations with Program Essentials in Early Intervention: Effective Evaluation for Quality Family-Centered Services, a professional development program sponsored by the NC Division of Human Resources and the Division of Maternal and Child Health. Morganton, Asheboro, and Greenville, NC.

Catlett, C. (1996, March). Promoting collaboration in early intervention: Resources and strategies to try together. Michigan Interdisciplinary Faculty Institute for Early Intervention, Lansing, MI.

Callarman, S., & Catlett, C. (1996, April). Family-professional partnerships: Methods and materials that support success. Early Childhood Intervention Statewide conference, Austin, TX.

Catlett, C., Hoge, D.R., & Walter, S. (1996, April). Evaluation and assessment in early intervention, Edwardsville, IL.

Catlett, C. (1996, April). Embedding early intervention content in existing coursework. University of the Virgin Islands, St. Thomas/St. Croix.

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Catlett, C. (1996, May). Team building. The Team Approach to Services for Children with Special Health Care Needs: Nutrition Makes a Difference, Chapel Hill, NC.

Coleman, T.J., & Catlett, C. (1996, May). Increasing sensitivity to cultural differences. The Team Approach to Services for Children with Special Health Care Needs: Nutrition Makes a Difference, Chapel Hill, NC.

Sloop, S.C., & Catlett, C. (1996, May). Better behaved trainers: Ideas you can use. Planning for Better Behavior Workshop, Burlington, NC.

Sloop, S., & Winton, P.J. (1996, May). Making it happen: Practical strategies for building family-professional partnerships in early intervention. 1/2 day workshop at the 1996 Early Childhood Intervention Statewide Conference, Austin, TX.

Catlett, C., Hoge, D.R., & Walter, S. (1996, June). Strategies for preparing personnel to include family members as team participants in assessment. Sixth Annual Illinois Faculty Development Institute, Oak Brook, IL. Sixth Annual Illinois Faculty Development Institute, Oak Brook, IL.

Catlett, C. (panel moderator). (1996, June). Family and faculty tell all: Ideas and opportunities for collaboration in training. Sixth Annual Illinois Faculty Development Institute, Oak Brook, IL.

Catlett, C., Gallagher, P.A., & Michael, D. (1996, June). Promoting quality and collaboration in personnel development: Strategies for linking materials, money, and manpower. Fourth Annual CSPD Conference, Arlington, VA.

Winton, P.J., & Snyder, P. (1996, June). New Ideas for Teaching about Early Intervention Laws and Policies. Presentation at the Southeastern Institute for Faculty Training Outreach event. Highland Lake, NC.

Catlett, C., Summers, J.A., & Lane, V. (1996, August). New approaches to early intervention personnel training. Partnerships for Progress VIII, Osage Beach, MO.

Catlett, C. (1996, September). Methods and materials for teaching and learning about teams and teamwork. Invited presentation, Georgia Higher Education Consortium for Early Intervention Institute, Helen, GA.

Catlett, C. (1996, September). Methods and materials for teaching and learning about family-professional collaboration. Invited presentation, Georgia Higher Education Consortium for Early Intervention Institute, Helen, GA.

Catlett, C. (1996, September). Methods and materials for teaching and learning about culture and diversity. Invited presentation, Georgia Higher Education Consortium for Early Intervention Institute, Helen, GA.

Catlett, C., & Parette, P. (1996, September). Have you tried this yet? Instructional strategies that promote active learning. Invited presentation, Missouri Interdisciplinary Faculty Institute for Early Intervention, Osage Beach, MO.

Catlett, C., Hoge, D.R., & Walter, S. (1996, September). Strategies for preparing personnel to include family members as team participants in assessment. Invited presentation, Missouri Interdisciplinary Faculty Institute for Early Intervention, Osage Beach, MO.

Catlett, C., & Hoge, D.R. (1996, September). New ideas for teaching in key early intervention content areas: Legislation, family-centered practices, and cultural diversity. Invited presentation, Missouri Interdisciplinary Faculty Institute for Early Intervention, Osage Beach, MO.

Winton, P. (1996, September). Being a change agent in a changing early childhood environment. Keynote address at the Leadership Conference for Early Childhood Planning and Coordinating Councils sponsored by Indiana's Unified Training System, Bloomington, IN.

Winton, P., Valiquette, S., Reeves, A., & Romich, B. (1996, September). Being a successful early childhood advocate in a changing environment. Presentation at the NC-aeyc/DEC Statewide Conference, Greensboro, NC.

Winton, P., Scher, P., & Thegen, K. (1996, September). Creating family-centered, quality child care: Community-based strategies and tools. Presentation at the NC-aeyc and DEC Statewide Conference, Greensboro, NC.

Catlett, C., Hoge, D.R., & Walter, S. (1996, October). Have you tried this yet? Methods and materials to support teaching and learning in early intervention. Invited 1-day faculty training workshop, PARTNERSHIPS: Training for Early Intervention Services, Champaign, IL.

Winton, P. (1996, October). Seminar session on Early Childhood Research Utilization in CDFS 121, an undergraduate seminar on early childhood leadership and administration. Chapel Hill, NC.

Catlett, C. (1996, November). Have you tried this yet? Personnel development strategies that promote active learning. Invited workshop, Innovations in Early Intervention Conference, Cromwell, CT.

Catlett, C., Irick, K., & Winton, P.J. (1996, December). It's NOT in there yet: Strategies for addressing diversity in personnel preparation. Conference session, International Division for Early Childhood Conference, Phoenix, AZ.

Catlett, C., & Hoge, D.R. (1996, December). Parent-professional partnerships in training. Poster presentation, International Division for Early Childhood Conference, Phoenix, AZ.

McWilliam, P., Winton, P., & Crais, B. (1996, December). From the beginning: Practical strategies for applying family-centered principles during first contacts with families. Presentation at the International Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Conference, Phoenix, AZ.

Pierce, P.L., & Catlett, C. (1996, December). Allied health alliances: Creative approaches for addressing personnel shortages. Poster presentation, International Division for Early Childhood Conference, Phoenix, AZ.

Winton, P., Catlett, C., Irick, K. & Solomon, J.W. (1996, December). Findings and products of the Southeastern Institute for Faculty Training (SIFT). Poster presentation, International Division for Early Childhood Conference, Phoenix, AZ.

Winton, P., McWilliam, P., & Snyder, P. (1996, December). Getting from here to there: Practical strategies for making changes in early childhood programs and policies. Presentation at the International Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Conference, Phoenix, AZ.

Publications

Winton, P., McCollum, J., & Catlett, C. (Eds.) (in press). Reforming personnel preparation in early intervention: Issues, methods, and practical strategies. Baltimore: Paul Brookes. *This text highlights key issues is preservice and inservice training and offers frameworks, methods, materials, and models for promoting productive change.*

Winton, P. (1996). A model for supporting higher education faculty in their early intervention personnel preparation roles. Infants and Young Children, 8(3), 56-67. *This article provides an overview of the critical components, lessons learned, and* promising *training strategies of the SIFT project.*

Winton, P., Catlett, C., & Houck, A. (1995). A systems approach to early intervention personnel preparation: A model for moving towards collaboration and effective training practices. In A. Widerstrom & D. Bricker (Eds.), Preparing personnel to work with infants and young children and their families: A team approach. Baltimore, MD: Paul Brookes. *This chapter summarizes the SIFT model and initial (cohort 1) findings.*

Winton, P., & DiVenere, N. (1995). Family-professional partnerships in early intervention personnel preparation: Guidelines and strategies. Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 15(3), 295-312. *This article offers guidelines and strategies for facilitating family participation in early intervention personnel preparation in ways that model collaborative family-professional partnerships.*

Winton, P. (1994). Early intervention personnel preparation: The past guides the future. Early Childhood Report, 5(5), 4-6. *A brief article summarizing the challenges of early childhood personnel preparation.*

Other Indicators of Project's Effect on the Field of Early Intervention and/or Children with Disabilities and their Families

- The SIFT newsletter, recently renamed *Systems Change in Personnel Preparation*, has been published twice each year, is currently received by 1,100 subscribers. Circulation has reliably expanded with each issue. A popular feature of the newsletters has been a section describing free training and technical assistance materials available from SIFT. To date, over 200 requests for these materials have been filled.

- The list originally identified as the Checklist of Quality Indicators Related to Early Intervention Inservice Training has been expanded: separate preservice and inservice versions are currently being disseminated. The "quality indicators" have been widely shared with SIFT participants, SLTT members, and others through publications and in conjunction with presentations.

- Over 500 copies of the SIFT *Resource Guide* have been disseminated directly by SIFT staff, through SLTT meetings, faculty training and other meetings with our southeastern states. Camera-ready, single-sided originals have been shared with 10 states (CA, CT, FL, GA, IL, KS, MO, NC, WA, WI) for further dissemination (e.g., North Carolina requested permission to reproduce and distribute the *Resource Guide* to program administrators, developmental evaluation centers, and school psychologists throughout the state). Disk-copy has been provided to two states (FL, VA).

The interactive format for connecting individuals involved in early intervention personnel preparation with high-quality, low-cost training materials, developed for the SIFT institutes, was replicated on several occasions. The SIFT library and staff traveled to two of three summer institutes held by the Midwest Consortium for Faculty Development (1994, 1995); copies of the Resource Guide were distributed to participating team members from all thirteen midwestern states (N= 135-150). Similarly, the SIFT library and staff participated in the summer retreat of the Northeastern Early Intervention Faculty Training Institute (approximately 50 representatives from twelve states).

- Based on our wish to share information about SIFT as widely as possible, Part H coordinators and ICC chairs from all states and jurisdictions have routinely been targeted for project dissemination.

- Staff of the four faculty training institutes have met at naturally occurring opportunities to coordinate efforts, share information, and plan future joint efforts. These meetings have been supported by, and when possible attended by, our shared federal project officer.

Implications of Findings

Lessons Learned and Promising Strategies

What follows is summary of some of the valuable lessons learned about early intervention personnel preparation, including information on useful and effective training strategies introduced through the SIFT model that now have been adopted and used by SIFT participants.

Faculty Are Willing and Interested in Participating in Inservice Efforts

At the beginning of this project, there was some anxiety about the level of interest that faculty might have for the activities of this project. Tenure and promotion are usually tied to preservice teaching, research and publication. Conducting inservice training in states and communities is not usually linked to these rewards. Even if faculty were willing to be involved, the extent to which faculty would be supported by deans and administrators was another uncertainty with research suggesting that support might be lacking.[10] The question of where and how to secure travel money to support faculty participation in the SIFT project was also a concern.

The rate of participation in this project makes it clear now that faculty are willing to commit time and energy to inservice training. Faculty were willing to commit an average of 14.5 days to inservice training. It is significant that deans and university administrators were supportive of faculty involvement. They might not be willing to sponsor or plan staff development activities for faculty; but if someone else does the planning, they are willing to play a supporting role.

One of the barriers identified by faculty to accomplishing the goals that they identified related to early intervention training were competing priorities for their time. Collaboration across disciplines, with families, and with state agencies takes time and energy; bureaucratic red tape at the state agency and university levels created frustration. Strategies identified by faculty for rewarding and reinforcing their participation included reimbursement so that their time could be "bought out" from existing university responsibilities, and bureaucratic support at the university and state levels for some of the collaborative and innovative approaches to training they wanted to implement.

Collegial Support is Important

Needs assessment data indicated that access to faculty with whom to co-teach was highly rated as a resource that would help faculty conduct inservice training. In addition, when asked during the follow-up interviews what contributed to their success in achieving their individual goals, a consistent response was the support of colleagues. This suggests that providing networking opportunities in conjunction with structured instructional sessions is an effective strategy for supporting faculty. Faculty also said that having some kind of means for continuing to sustain these relationships, which sometimes entailed distances across states, were helpful. Higher education consortia or personnel preparation sub-committees of the state interagency coordinating council (ICC) were strategies that were potentially helpful, although faculty indicated that these structures can be unrewarding if they lack clearly stated, meaningful, and obtainable goals. A mechanism that has worked well in some states is the creation of regional training teams consisting of SIFT participants, including families, service providers, state agency representatives and faculty. These have provided participants with a concrete opportunity to implement training ideas and relationships developed through SIFT.

Faculty Want Access to Training Resources

Access to training resources was also identified by faculty through the needs assessment process as a critical resource that would assist them in inservice training efforts. After participating in the four day faculty training institute, most states pursued strategies for developing or updating training resource libraries in their states. Some states used Part H money or blended money from several state agencies to purchase materials discovered through SIFT and to set up or update state-wide or regionally-based lending libraries. Other states discovered that some of the materials were available in their states; access had been limited because of lack of information about the materials. States realized that resource guides describing existing materials were important in promoting access. Most states disseminated the SIFT *Resource Guide*[25] to a broader state-wide audience; in one state this was through an electronic network.

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Increased Emphasis and Appreciation for the Importance of Innovative Training Strategies

Another finding from the faculty needs assessment was that faculty were more confident in their knowledge and skills related to early intervention content than they were of their knowledge and skills related to training strategies. Most participants left the SIFT faculty training institute with an increased appreciation for the important role that adult learning principles and interactive training strategies have in successfully conveying and teaching early intervention content and skills to practitioners and students. Pre-6 month post data indicated that participants increased their use of interactive, innovative instructional strategies six months after the training institute than they were before.[32] A related outcome is that some states are beginning to share information about training strategies and build skills with a broader audience in their own states. Several states have planned and implemented "Train the Trainer" workshops or strands, modeled after the SIFT faculty training institute, as part of larger conferences for faculty and state agency personnel across disciplines and agencies. Training strategies that they have used in these "Train the Trainer" events include the following:

- "boss/dean" letters to effectively engage university support for faculty participation
- "back home plans" to encourage immediate application of ideas to practice
- resource libraries to provide faculty with immediate access to exemplary training materials
- instructional sessions that demonstrate innovative training strategies.

Outcomes Evolved

There were many unique outcomes and activities that developed as a result of this project and the relationships that were made among faculty teams. Some of these outcomes were not part of the planning process done at the four day institute, but evolved over time. For instance, in one state a physical therapist, a speech-language pathologist and a psychologist collaborated in developing and implementing inservice training on assistive technology. They decided to draw from the quality indicators in designing the training. Parents of young children with assistive technology needs were invited to attend the training and were asked to invite two members of their "team" (i.e., professionals who were working with their children) to participate. This unique approach to addressing family and interdisciplinary audience participation is something they will continue to use when possible. This is but one example of some of the unexpected outcomes that were the result of the SIFT project. Without a 6 month follow up evaluation component that included a semi-structured interview, this kind of outcome would not have been documented.

Systems Change Requires Time

The emphasis on linking higher education and state agency efforts clearly had benefits. Faculty came to the training with some specific ideas about ways they might apply what they learned within a broader state plan. They also came knowing that their involvement was supported by university and state administrators, and that there was some expectation that they would serve as a training resource for the state agencies within their state. In light of the research conducted by the Carolina Policy Studies Project indicating that states who have made the most progress in implementing the personnel preparation components of Part H are those that have strong linkages between state agencies and institutions of higher education,[33] creating this sense of a "shared commitment" between university faculty and state agencies was considered to be an important component of the model from the model's inception. Pre-6 month post differences indicated that preservice-inservice linkages have occurred as a result of SIFT.[32] However, preliminary data related to the implementation of state and individual plans suggest that six months is not a long enough time to implement the type of interagency, comprehensive state plans developed by many of the teams and individuals, especially when the changes being tried depart from traditional approaches. In addition, comments made by many faculty

participants at the six-month follow-up indicated that they were not in control over many critical components of the inservice training they were asked to conduct. Trying to promote and implement training according to the "Quality Indictors" (Appendix A) was perceived to require long-term, advocacy-oriented efforts. Faculty encountered administrative red tape. They found that the time required to implement some of the ideas was more than they were prepared to give. An important lesson learned is that longer follow-up is necessary in order to support and monitor attempts to redesign personnel preparation systems to meet quality standards. Another related finding is the importance of the follow-up provided by the SIFT project; this was cited by a large percentage of faculty as being a facilitator to their being able to accomplish their goals.

Evaluation is Critical

For a long time personnel preparation has been a "backburner" Part H issue in states. States have had to struggle with more pressing components of the legislation such as determining eligibility, developing child find strategies, and dealing with service coordination, delivery and funding issues. Now that all states have reached the implementation phase of Part H, attention is being turned to personnel issues. Policymakers at state and federal levels are asking questions about the efficacy of current personnel efforts. They are wondering why universities have not successfully solved the shortage problems and why turnover rates remain high. They want data supporting the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Personnel Development Plans that all states must have in order to qualify for Part H money from the federal granting agency. Unfortunately, evaluation data is scarce. Too often the "train and hope" mentality has prevailed; evaluation efforts have focused on superficial outcomes, such as number of participants, number of events held, and general satisfaction levels of participants. Questions such as, "Did the training result in documented and positive changes in skill and knowledge levels of participants" Did the participants apply what they learned in their practice settings?" "Did positive changes in program policies and practices result from the training efforts" are rarely addressed. A related issue is that the form of training most often used, the one-shot workshop, is not likely to be effective as a means for accomplishing these outcomes.

Faculty who participated in the SIFT model learned about innovative approaches and models to personnel preparation that involve partnerships across disciplines and with service providers and families; they have been exposed to evaluation strategies that address the outcomes described above. Faculty also have incentives and pressures to conduct research and disseminate findings; this is a primary means for obtaining promotions and respect from academic colleagues. These are the strengths that university faculty bring to personnel preparation evaluation efforts. State agencies have training monies and responsibilities; they also have interest and expertise in evaluation research but often lack the manpower resources to implement effective evaluations. Working together can serve both groups. The ultimate beneficiaries of the quality personnel preparation efforts that will result from this partnership are the practitioners and the young children and families they serve.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Several future activities that build on SIFT are planned or underway. First, the project director and project coordinator have secured two additional Department of Education awards to pursue investigation of that build directly on SIFT. The first is an outreach project (Southeastern Institute for Faculty Training Outreach or SIFT-OUT), funded by the Early Education Program for Children with Disabilities (EEPCD), Department of Education (1995-1998), and designed to extend the SIFT model to five states beyond the assigned southeastern region (ID, IN, NM, OH, TX). The second, a Special

Project entitled Supporting Change and Reform in Interprofessional Preservice Training (*SCRIPT*), will use SIFT formats to plan for and support preservice changes in eight states. In addition, the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center was awarded 5-year funding in 1996 to establish and operate a National Research Center for Early Childhood Development and Learning (NCEDL). It is anticipated that several activities of the Center related to materials development and dissemination will expand on work begun through SIFT.

An additional development will be the publication by Paul H. Brookes of an edited book entitled *Reforming Personnel Preparation in Early Intervention: Issues, Models, and Practical Strategies*. The book, which will be available in June, 1997, will tap many SIFT methods, materials, and human resources in offering both broad and individual strategies for considering and promoting productive change.

ASSURANCE STATEMENT

A copy of this full final report has been sent to the ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children. In addition a copy of the title page and abstract have been sent to the following organizations:

NEC*TAS
National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education (CEC)
National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)
Technical Assistance for Parent Programs Project (TAPP)
National Diffusion Network
Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP)
Northeast Regional Resource Center
Midsouth Regional Resource Center
South Atlantic Regional Resource Center
Great Lakes Area Regional Resource Center
Mountain Plains Reginoal Resource Center
Western Regional Resource Center
Federal Regional Resource Center

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Appendix A

Checklist of Quality Indicators Related to Early Intervention Inservice Training

- Is the training you are planning coordinated with your state's CSPD plan?
- Will you ensure that certification or licensure credits are available to all trainees who participate?
- In planning and conducting this training, will you work as part of an interdisciplinary instructor team?
- Will family members of children with disabilities (consumers of services) participate as part of the instructor's team?
- In terms of the target audience, will efforts be made to conduct "team-based" training (including as many of the key professionals who work together on a team as possible)?
- Will efforts be made to attract an interdisciplinary audience (at least three or more disciplines are well represented)?
- Will family members be involved as participants?
- Will the training be actively endorsed and/or attended by administrators?
- Will experiential activities and modeling/demonstration opportunities be provided as part of the training?
- Will handouts be provided (for review of content by trainees at a later time)?
- Will training strategies be varied and sequenced in such a way as to meet the needs of different learning styles?
- Will training strategies be used for embedding/applying the training ideas to the workplace?
- Will trainees identify specific ideas/practices that they desire to try in the workplace (an action plan)?
- Will ongoing support, monitoring or technical assistance be provided to trainees?
- Will be actual impact of training on practices be measured or evaluated?

Note: From "Early intervention personnel preparation: The past guides the future," by P. J. Winton, 1993, Early Childhood Report, 5(5), p. 5. Copyright 1993 by LRP Publications.

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Appendix B

TECHNICAL ADVISORY BOARD (TAB)

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(former director of the CSPD project at the Council for Exceptional Children)

Eugene Perrotta
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Smoky Mountain Center
Cullowhee, North Carolina
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Cordelia Robinson
Director, JFK Center for Developmental Disabilities
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